



The 4-D Approach to Time Management

It's vital that you effectively separate so-called urgent tasks from your most important priorities. Putting out fires all day long in the office is, as time management expert Harold Taylor says, "Giving in to the tyranny of the urgent". That means every time a telephone rings you jump to answer it or responding instantly when a letter lands on your desk or when you are trying to sift through those hundreds of e-mails land in your in-box every day!

To help you out, follow these steps and focus on your priorities. Whenever a choice to do or not do something has to be made, use *Jennifer Britton's 4-D formula* © to help you prioritize. You have four options to choose from:

1. **Dump it:**

Learn to say, "no, I choose not to do this". Be firm.

2. **Delegate it**

These are tasks that need to be done, but you are not the person to do them. Hand them over to someone else, with no guilt or regrets. Simply ask, "Who else could do this?"

3. **Defer It**

These are issues that you do need to work on, but not right away. These can generally be deferred. Schedule a specific time at a later date to handle this type of work.

4. **Do It**

Do it now. Important projects need your attention right away so gets started today. Move forward. Give yourself a reward for completing these projects. Don't make excuses. Remember, if you don't take prompt action you'll end up with unpleasant consequences.

Which of the 4D's are you really good at? Which them do you want to practice more? Which of them will really help you get on track?

The 4-D Approach to Time Management © has been modified and is used with the permission of Jennifer Britton.